

USEFUL INFORMATION FOR PRACTITIONERS

Training programs in 1) telephone manners & 2) handling complaints are available on film or video from National Educational Media. "The impression an organization makes on its clients is very important to its success. Wise employees know that 9 times out of 10, customers remember 2 things: how they were treated on the phone and how their complaints were handled. And woe to those who botch the job," says Jack Copeland, pres. Printed study kits included with both programs. Available for purchase, 1-week rental & preview for purchase consideration. (More info from NEM, 800/245-6009; in Calif, 818/709-6009; in Canada, Omega Films, 416/291-4733.)

PRSA's 1986 Bibliography for Public Relations Professionals is available. Includes listings of general books, directories, periodicals & 33 special interest areas such as persuasion, crisis management, ethics, international, marketing, sports, theater, utilities. From PRSA Info Center, 845 Third Ave, NYC 10022; \$4 (mbrs), \$10 (nonmbrs).

Free listings of US & Canadian consultants sought for Consultants & Consulting Organizations Directory. 7th edition is now being compiled by Gale Research. Directory gives names, addresses & pertinent details of consultants & their firms. To be included, write for questionnaire: Janice McLean, Editorial Services Ltd, P.O. Box 6789, Silver Spring, Md. 20906.

Public relations measurement is the focus of "Communications Ideas" (Spring '86) -- Public Communication Inc's newsletter. "There is a general myth that public relations programs, unlike advertising campaigns, cannot be precisely measured. Determining the effects of a pr program does not have to be mysterious. It is a matter of setting goals, designing programs to achieve those goals, then documenting the cause-and-effect results of the program." Each article describes how pr helped market a product or service and how the results were measured. (Copy from PCI, 35 East Wacker Drive, Chi 60601.)

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

AWARDS. Arthur W. Page awards series, sponsored by AT&T, PRSA & UTexas-Austin, distinguishes those who represent the principles pioneered by Page -- "All business begins with public permission and exists by public approval."

Harold Burson (CEO, Burson-Marsteller, NYC) receives Arthur W. Page Public Relations Professional Award...Gene

TIDBIT FOR SPORTS MARKETERS	
If you are wondering what sports women watch, it is not auto racing. According to a recent Miller Lite study, most watched are:	
Gymnastics	62%
Football	61%
Volleyball	60%
Tennis	56%
Softball	51%
Track & Field	50%
Basketball	49%
Swimming/Diving	45%
Skiing	42%
Ice Skating	41%
-- from Motorsports Marketing Ass'n (Langhorne, Pa.)	

Attal (vp-pa, Seton Medical Center, Austin) named UT Alumnus in Public Relations...Neal Spelce (CEO, Neal Spelce Communications, Austin) receives Austin Star Award...Philip Taggart (chrm, Churchill Group, Houston) receives Texas Star Award...Dale Chrisman (CEO, Dale Chrisman & Assocs, Austin) receives Chapter Star Award.

pr reporter

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PUBLIC RELATIONS MUST MOVE OUT FRONT AND STIMULATE DISCUSSION, EDUCATION & UNDERSTANDING OF "ACUTE GLOBAL ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES"; U.S. PUBLIC POORLY INFORMED, MANY PR PROS SIMPLY PEDDLE INFLUENCE

This is the opportunity & problem seen by Frank Vogl, dir of info & pa for The World Bank, in this year's Arthur W. Page Lecture. "Thanks to a media that largely ignores key economic issues, or is intimidated by them, the US public is more poorly informed on such issues than is the public in most other industrial nations."

While acclaiming the stature of US public relations, he chides the Washington-wizard types who peddle influence. "How can we hope that the public will become more aware" of vital interests "if those in public relations are more embroiled in peddling influence, or more concerned with being messengers than designers of the messages -- indeed of the debates?"

PROACTIVELY STIMULATE PUBLIC DEBATE

1. Corporate leaders should be stimulating public debate on key issues, not waiting for the media to afflict them and then diving for cover. The silence of corporate America on these issues is deafening."

2. "Public relations professionals ought to be perceived as issues experts in their own right, contributing directly to the shaping of public debate." (See this week's t&t on issues analysis.)

3. Go public on issues. Some industries, like banking, "air their views through arcane newsletters, Washington lobbyists and ways that quite ignore the public at large. They are refraining from public debate. Why such silence?"

"Public relations must move forward from the realm of constructing corporate & institutional images, to promoting debate & education of the great issues of our time. This is a formidable challenge, but I submit that against the backcloth of today's economic difficulties, the media's inadequacies & the benefits to society, there are no choices."

Some key points:

4. Some industries, like oil, still believe in the smoke-filled room. "They have felt that private lobbying in Washington is the way to secure their interests. This course fails to take account of the simple truth that an informed general public is likely to be more supportive over time than an ignorant public."

5. Individual organizations benefit by speaking out. This shows "an active concern in the welfare and the economic future of America. They ought to be leading the public debate and seeking long-term courses of action to foster the public debate, not hiding behind the Mike Deavers of Washington and the generalities of trade associations."



6. News media are irresponsible. "Economics finds difficulty in securing space in most of today's newspapers. Most nationally syndicated columnists seem so intimidated by matters economic that they avoid

them. Much of the press has paid far more attention to the fleeting comments about White House personalities made by David Stockman in his new book than to his central & serious thesis that the economy is in desperate difficulty."

PUBLIC RELATIONS' ROLE IN THE SOLUTION

1. To begin with, says Vogl, "every public relations professional should have an up-to-date statement of the values & purposes of his or her institution at the ready. It provides a framework from which to communicate publicly" -- not just about the organization but also about its views on critical issues. "Public relations should never be slick or simplistic. It should be clear. It should not shy away from substance."

3. "Promote education on the issues over promotion of your organization or your president. The World Bank has found time & again that our association with the promotion of public discussion of the issues does indeed have a beneficial educative impact, while over time enhancing the image of the Bank as well."

2. "In public relations one must accept that one will not be loved by all audiences and one's chief executive officer must recognize that criticism by some is unavoidable."

4. "Equally crucial is the staffing of public relations departments with people who are not only expert in the art of public relations, but who have knowledge as well on the issues that need to be communicated."

IS PHELPS DODGE GIVING ITSELF (& BUSINESS) A BLACK EYE -- OR CAN STONEWALLING WORK?

Phelps Dodge is being accused by Greenpeace of being the largest source of acid rain in the West. The EPA has proposed shutting down the company's smelter in Douglas, Ariz, for violating

the Clean Air Act. According to an article in the Arizona Republic, the smelter is "the single largest source of sulfur-dioxide emissions in the country."

This case raises anew an old strategy decision for practitioners. By ignoring public relationships surrounding an issue, what repercussions will you be reacting to tomorrow? Will repercussions haunt your whole field? Or can issues be stonewalled? Especially when only activists or government agencies, not the public, are criticizing.

pr asked Phelps Dodge what its pr strategy is for dealing with this issue. Vp-pr Richard Pendleton's response was, "None." Greenpeace's accusation is a "non-event as far as we're concerned." Vp Pat Scanlon's response to the Arizona Republic was similar, "There is no Western acid-rain problem, as far as we are concerned."

Rather than using public relations, the company is approaching the issue from a legal avenue. "There was a big hearing last week with the EPA out in Douglas. We made a presentation. Nothing was decided," Pendleton told pr.

"LISTENING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT COMPONENT IN THE ORAL COMMUNICATION PROCESS"; INVOLVES EYES, EARS, MIND, EMOTIONS

So says William Gering, IndianaU (South Bend), a founding member of International Listening Association. Its members -- from 49 states, 15 countries -- represent education, business, industry, gov't, consulting, publishing.

Listening is not passive, says an article in the Assn's newsletter. "Listening should be very active. We must work at trying to get at the meaning of the message being conveyed by the speaker. The active listener is constantly searching for meaning by analyzing, intellectually & emotionally, what is being said. We listen with our eyes, ears & minds."

Good eye contact involves "watching the speaker's eyes, mouth, neckline & facial expressions, and then glancing away for a few seconds now & then so as not to make the speaker feel self-conscious." It helps focus attention, wards off distraction and communicates the listener's interest. Most importantly, it discerns "the true intent of the message through body language & facial expressions."

\$50/yr membership includes quarterly newsletter, bibliography, membership directory. "For the first time this fall we'll be offering our members an annual journal of research papers," spokesperson Charlene Johnson told pr. Workshops, seminars, annual conference & a biannual summer conference teach listening skills. (More info from ILA at 1000 Coconut Creek Blvd, Pompano Beach, Fla. 33066; 305/973-2370.)

5-YEAR RESEARCH PROJECT TO SEARCH OUT "EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNICATION & PUBLIC RELATIONS" IS PLANNED BY IABC FOUNDATION

300 organizations in US, Canada, Britain will be studied. Programs considered excellent will be analyzed to see how they were conceptualized, managed & carried out. Result will be 1) a model for effective management of public relations, 2) an understanding of public relations' contribution to organizational goals and 3) what that contribution is worth.

Funds are being sought. Contributors will be included in the sample of organizations studied. They will receive a) literature review of the concepts & theories explaining characteristics of excellent pr programs, b) individual reports on their own programs. Contributors of \$50,000+ will also receive c) an indepth presentation of the report by one of the researchers.

"Public relations programs can be subjected to evaluation in a way that is similar to an environmental impact statement: one can measure the cost of doing public relations and compare the relative costs & effects of alternative programs. It is possible, in other words, to determine whether public relations programs meet their corporate objectives," explains Jim Grunig.

Research, to begin in July, will be done by 1) James Grunig, UMD, 2) David Dozier, San Diego StateU, 3) William Ehling, SyracuseU, 4) Larissa Grunig, UMD, 5) Fred Repper, consultant, 6) Jon White, Cranfield School of Mgmt (UK). (More info from IABC Foundation, 870 Market St, Ste.940, SF 94102; 415/433-3400.)